

Remarks:

This amendment is submitted in an earnest effort to advance this case to issue without delay.

The specification has been amended to eliminate some minor obvious errors. The part of the description and the drawing figures not covered by the claims has been dropped. No new matter whatsoever has been added.

Transmitted herewith is a fresh ST08 listing the three foreign patent references and saying what parts of these references are relevant. These references were all cited in the International Search Report filed with the original application papers

Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly define the instant invention over the art. Thus new claim 1 describes as shown in FIGS. 1-3 a locking element for holding together threaded parts such as screws 10 and nuts against undesired loosening, the locking element comprising two annular lock washers 1 and 2 lying on each other and having center holes 14, the washers 1 and 2 having inner faces lying on each other and provided with teeth 7 and outer faces turned away from each other and also provided with teeth, one of the washers 1 and 2 being formed at the respective

center hole 14 on the respective outer face with a rounding 6 or a groove 24.

Thus the rounding/groove 6/24 is specifically identified as being at the center hole and on the outer face. Nothing like this is seen in the applied art.

More particularly, US 5,080,545 of MacKinlay shows in FIG. 3 grooves formed in the confronting inner faces of the washers 11. This is a different structure and will not prevent the spring-steel washers from digging into the somewhat softer screw shank 23 they surround.

US 4,708,555 of Terry has no such groove or rounding anywhere.

Thus nothing in either of the cited references shows the claimed structure, making a §102 rejection impossible, and nothing suggests it, eliminating a §103 rejection.

All the claims in the case are therefore in condition for allowance and passage to issue. Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

If only minor problems that could be corrected by means of a telephone conference stand in the way of allowance of this

case, the examiner is invited to call the undersigned to make the necessary corrections.

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